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MICHAEL P. KITCHEN

Chief

TIMOTHY D. COLLINS

Captain

March 14, 2007

Representative Steve Bieda  
Chairman, Tax Policy Committee

Dear Representative Bieda,

I am the Chief of Police in Ferndale and it has been brought to my attention that your Committee is considering several bills that will stimulate Michigan's economy and our real estate market with the end result of investing in community safety and ultimately, in Michigan's future.

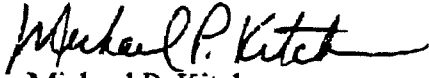
I have consulted with my colleagues in Southeast Michigan and I believe I am speaking for them when I reiterate that we all feel shortchanged by Lansing because of dramatically reduced revenue sharing. The loss of these funds, as you know, has had a devastating effect on some departments and their ability to conduct their mission. The Ferndale Police Department has lost five positions but some of my neighbors have lost significantly more. It is my understanding that the combination of House Bills 4440, 4441 and 4442 will provide an opportunity to provide public safety funding to replace some of our revenue sharing losses and I applaud this innovative approach to this challenge.

HB4440, the "pop-up moratorium," seems to provide the inertia for the others but actually has a negative impact on local communities so it is appropriately tie-barred to HB4441 which increases the transfer tax on homestead transactions from .75% to .85% with the .10% earmarked for local public safety. That is a good start but realistically, not very much money and phased out relatively quickly.

My purpose then today is to urge your support, and that of your committee, for HB4442, which is independent of the others. This bill has far more positive and long range consequences beyond funding for public safety, although that, of course is my primary concern. By permanently excluding increases in taxable value due to the pop-up from the millage reduction fraction calculation, cities would realize increased revenue while still keeping the promises of Proposal A for existing home owners.

HB4442 actually serves to solve a long-term city finance problem and having the proceeds earmarked for public safety is a tremendous bonus. As we have all seen by the most recent PERF study and as highlighted by Mayor Kilpatrick last night, crime (especially violent crime) is increasing and can be debilitating. The passing of these bills will allow our communities to reinvest in our public safety solutions and offer our citizens the quality of life that they rightfully expect and deserve. I urge your support in this matter.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Michael P. Kitchen", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Michael P. Kitchen  
Chief of Police  
Ferndale